printers 13 to 15 has been specified, the status of each of printers 13 to 15 is acquired. A known example of a method of acquiring printer status is a protocol for acquiring printer status by SNMP or the like. It is then determined at step S55 whether the status of each of these distributed printers is normal. If a malfunctioning printer is found, control proceeds to step S63 in Fig. 6 and processing for executing reprint in the event of malfunction is executed.

If the status of all distributed printers is normal ("NO" at step S55), then it is determined at step S56 whether all printing has ended. This includes distributed jobs and reprint jobs in the event of malfunction. If there is a job that is not finished, control returns to step S54. If all jobs are finished, on the other hand, then control proceeds to step S57.

It is determined at step S57 whether printing ended normally without the occurrence of malfunction in distributed-print processing. If printed ended normally, then distributed-print processing is exited. If reprint was carried out owing to the occurrence of malfunction, control proceeds to step S58. If the setting area 45 in Fig. 45 was configured so as to display a malfunction reprint report ("YES" at step S58), control proceeds to step S59. If the setting area 45 was not so configured ("NO" at step S58), then distributed-print processing is exited. Step S59 calls

for the creation of the malfunction reprint report. This is followed by step S510, at which the created report is displayed on the display unit 28.

Fig. 6 is a flowchart useful in describing processing for performing reprint in the event of printer malfunction when such a malfunction has been verified at step S55 in Fig. 5. It is determined at step S63 whether a distributed job in a printer that has malfunctioned is capable of being deleted. If the job can be deleted, then deletion is performed at step S64. This processing makes it possible to prevent needless printing from being carried out when a printer that malfunctioned has recovered from the malfunction.

This is followed by step S65, at which it is determined whether the format of the spool file is that of a metafile. Control proceeds to step S610 if the spool is not a metafile spool and to step S66 if the spool is a metafile spool. It is determined at step S66 whether the setting of item 41 in Fig. 4 is such that only the page for which printing failed is to be reprinted. If only the page for which printing failed is to be reprinted, control proceeds to step S67. Otherwise, i.e., if all pages that the malfunctioning printer attempted to print are to be reprinted, control proceeds to step S610. At step S67, through use of a method similar to that of step S52, only the page for which printing failed is extracted from the metafile

that prevailed prior to the introduction of the distributed job to the faulty printer, and the job (reprint job) is reconstructed.

It is determined at steps S68 and S610 whether "GIVE PRIORITY TO PRINTING BY PRINTER THAT PRINTED PRECEDING OR SUCCEEDING PAGES" has been selected at item 42 in Fig. 4. Control proceeds from step S68 to step S80 in Fig. 8 and from step S610 to step S73 in Fig. 7 if this item has been selected, and from step S68 to step S69 and from step S610 to step S611 if this item has not been selected.

At steps S69 and S611, the reprint job is introduced to the printer or bin specified in area 44 of Fig. 4, after which control returns to step S56 in Fig. 5.

Fig. 7 is a flowchart illustrating processing in a case where all pages that were to be printed by a faulty printer are to be reprinted and "GIVE PRIORITY TO PRINTING BY PRINTER THAT PRINTED PRECEDING OR SUCCEEDING PAGES" has been selected at item 42 in Fig. 4.

First, at step S73, the printer that printed the pages preceding the distributed job that was to be printed by the printer that malfunctioned is specified and information concerning the configuration of this printer is acquired, whereby it is determined whether the printer ahead of the faulty printer is of the type that ejects paper face-down. In a case where a